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## Senate

The Senate met at 9:45 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. STEVENS).

### PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Sovereign shepherd, who guides and protects us, hallowed be Your name. We praise You for Your love and wisdom. Lord, You are compassionate and gracious, full of loving kindness, ready to forgive, and generous beyond imagining. We find refuge in the shadow of Your wings.

Thank You for the gift of Yourself and for teaching us how to live and serve. Forgive us when we fail to live in complete dependence upon You so that Your power can work through us.

Strengthen our Senators today in every good work and every good word so that they may honor You in their labors. Give them joy in doing Your will. Help them to be attentive to Your voice and sensitive to Your movements.

Transform each of us into Your instruments, enabling us to help bring peace to our world.

We pray this in Your holy Name. Amen.

### PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The PRESIDENT pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

### RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

### SCHEDULE

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, today the Senate will be in a period of morning

business for 60 minutes. The first 30 minutes will be under the control of the Democratic leader or his designee, and the final 30 minutes will be controlled by this side of the aisle. That hour of morning business will begin after leader time is used.

Prior to the Easter break, I mentioned our intention to begin consideration of the asbestos legislation. I understand there will be objection from the other side of the aisle and, therefore, I will move to proceed to the asbestos measure.

I do ask Members to come to the floor today to debate this motion. If we are unable to begin consideration of the bill, it may be necessary to file cloture on the motion to proceed. Discussions will be underway over the course of this morning across the aisle and among various interested Senators as to specific plans.

### UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST— S. 2290

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that immediately following the morning business period today, the Senate begin consideration of Calendar No. 472, S. 2290, the asbestos bill.

Mr. DASCHLE. I object.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Objection is heard.

### FAIRNESS IN ASBESTOS INJURY RESOLUTION ACT OF 2004—MO- TION TO PROCEED

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I now move to proceed to the consideration of S. 2290, and I ask unanimous consent that the motion be set aside until the conclusion of the use of leader time and the 1 hour period of morning business.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

### RECOGNITION OF THE ASSISTANT DEMOCRATIC LEADER

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The deputy leader is recognized.

### ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, very briefly, under our controlled one-half hour, we yield 15 minutes to Senator HARKIN, 7½ minutes to Senator CORZINE, and 7½ minutes to Senator SARBANES.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I am going to make a 10-minute statement. I would be happy to turn to the Democratic leader for any opening comments.

Mr. DASCHLE. I have a statement as well. It would require about the same length of time. I will defer to the majority leader and make my comments after he has completed his.

### ASBESTOS LITIGATION REFORM

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, for Senators who are going to be here for morning business, it will probably be another 20 minutes or so, total time between the two leaders' time, before morning business begins.

As I said in my opening comments, our intention is to go to asbestos and to bring to closure a very important piece of legislation that a lot of people across the aisle have worked on and are dedicated to addressing.

I believe now is the time to do that. I want to briefly introduce my view of the current status of the asbestos litigation debate and how I think we can bring that debate to closure.

This body—both sides of the aisle—has recognized that asbestos litigation has run amok. It is time to fix what has become an embarrassing, inadequate system that we have, the purpose of which is to compensate victims. The current system is broken. It fails to compensate victims fairly, while at

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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